

**Congressman Blumenauer (Democrat, OR)**  
**Senator Merkley (Democrat, OR)**

## **PORTLAND HARBOR SUPERFUND SITE**

**QUESTION:** What has EPA done to identify potentially responsible parties (PRPs) to help cover the costs of cleanup at this site?

**ANSWER:**

- EPA is actively searching for PRPs. EPA is evaluating information from 285 information request letters sent out in early 2008 along with several more issued over the past two years. Since 2000 EPA has identified approximately 125 potentially liable parties (PRPs), including several federal departments and agencies.
- While this search continues, the Lower Willamette Group (LWG), a group of potentially responsible parties (PRPs), have funded, under an Administrative Order on Consent (AOC) with EPA, The Draft Remedial Investigation (RI) Report for Portland Harbor which was submitted to EPA in October 2009. EPA has been scoping the Feasibility Study (FS) both internally and collaboratively with the LWG since early 2009, and EPA anticipates issuing the Proposed Plan for public comment in 2013 and a Record of Decision in 2013.

**Question:** Why are the federal PRPs not participating in the third party mediation that EPA has encouraged all PRPs to undertake?

Confidentiality issues often poses obstacles for the US to participate in confidential mediation processes with private parties, because it is not possible for the US to withhold information it learns in such a process from EPA or other federal agencies.

Nonetheless, the Department of Justice and the PRPs are close to reaching agreement on mutually acceptable terms that will allow the federal PRPs to participate in the allocation in a more limited way.

**BACKGROUND:**

- Portland Harbor is located on the Willamette River near Portland, Oregon, and the Site was placed on the National Priorities List in 2000. A century of industrial uses left the Site with a legacy of contamination including metals (e.g., copper, lead and zinc), pesticides (e.g., DDT and metabolites), PCBs, petroleum products, polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs), phthalates, and dioxin/furans.
- EPA is joined in oversight by the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality (ODEQ), the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, and the Yakama, Grande Ronde, Siletz, Warm Springs, Umatilla and Nez Perce Tribes.

- Congressional Inquiries: During 2010 Congressman Blumenauer held two meetings in which it invited EPA to come and discuss the schedule, the cost and the adequacy of EPA resources to support the Feasibility Study for Portland Harbor. The Congressman also inquired as to alleged differences between PCB cleanup levels for the Hudson River and risk assessment scenarios.

**CONGRESSIONAL INQUIRIES/INTEREST:**

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